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Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"

Report of the Third Committee

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I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 19 September 2003, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-eighth session the item entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled 'Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century'" and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. The Third Committee held a substantive debate on the item jointly with item 110 at its 11th to 16th meetings, from 15 to 17 October 2003, and took up a proposal relating to the item at its 57th meeting, on 26 November. An account of the Committee's discussion is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.3/58/SR. 11-16 and 57).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Relevant sections of the report of the Economic and Social Council for 2003;[1]

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to and progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session (A/58/166).

[1] A/58/3 (Parts I and I!); for the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/58/3/Rev.1).

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4. At the 11th meeting, on 15 October, introductory statements were made by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) (see A/C.3/58/SR.11).

5. At the same meeting, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Executive Director of UNIFEM engaged in a dialogue with the Committee in which the representatives of Italy, Singapore, Canada, the Syrian Arab Republic, Cuba, Afghanistan, Peru, Croatia and Spain and the observer for Palestine took part (see A/C.3/58/SR.11).

6. Also at the same meeting, the Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women made a statement (see A/C.3/58/SR.11).

II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.85

7. At the 57th meeting, on 26 November, the Chairman introduced a draft resolution entitled "Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly" (A/C.3/58/L.85), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations.

8. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.85 without a vote (see para. 10).

9. After the draft resolution was adopted, a statement was made by the representative of the United States of America (see A/C.3/58/SR.57).

III. Recommendation of the Third Committee

10. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Recalling its previous resolutions on the question, including resolution 57/182 of 18 December 2002,

Recalling also the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[1] and the proposed actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and challenges thereto,

Deeply convinced that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[2] and the outcome of the twenty-third special session are important contributions to the advancement of women worldwide in the achievement of gender equality and must be translated into effective action by all States, the United Nations system and other organizations concerned, as well as by non-governmental organizations,

Stressing the importance of strong, sustained political will and commitment at the national, regional and international levels for achieving full and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session,

Recognizing that the responsibility for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session rests primarily at the national level and that strengthened efforts are necessary in this respect, and reiterating that enhanced international cooperation is essential for the effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session,

Welcoming the increased attention to the situation of women and girls and the integration of a gender perspective in the work of the United Nations, in particular in the outcomes of major conferences, special sessions and summit conferences and their follow-up processes, and reaffirming its commitment to building on progress achieved in this respect,

Emphasizing the importance of Economic and Social Council decision 2003/287 of 24 July 2003, in which the Council decided to undertake, during its coordination segment in 2004, a review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of its agreed conclusions 1997/2 on mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, adopted

[1] Resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[2] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

by the Council on 18 July 1997,[3] and taking note of Council resolution 2003/49 of 24 July 2003,

Reaffirming the primary and essential role of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in promoting the advancement of women and gender equality, while noting the open debate on women and peace and security held in the Security Council on 28 and 29 October 2002[4] and on 29 October 2003,[5]

Taking note of the relevant General Assembly resolutions and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000,

1. *Reaffirms* the goals, objectives and commitments contained in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[2] and also in the political declaration and further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session;[1]

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to and progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;[6]

3. *Calls upon* Governments, the relevant entities of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, and all relevant actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to continue to take effective action to achieve the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

4. *Reaffirms* its decision that the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women, in accordance with their respective mandates and with General Assembly resolutions 48/162 of 20 December 1993 and 57/270 B of 23 June 2003 and other relevant resolutions, constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism that plays the primary role in overall policy-making and follow-up and in coordinating the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

5. *Also reaffirms* that the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the twenty-third special session will be undertaken within the framework of an integrated and coordinated follow-up to major international conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields;

6. *Strongly encourages* Governments to continue to support the role and contribution of civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations and women's organizations, in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

7. *Calls upon* Governments and all other relevant actors to continue to integrate a gender perspective into the implementation of and follow-up to recent

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[3] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/52/3/Rev.1), chap. IV, para. 4.

[4] See S/PV.4635 and S/PV.4635 (Resumption 1).

[5] See S/PV.4852 and S/PV.4852 (Resumption 1).

[6] A/58/166.

United Nations conferences, summits and special sessions and in future reports on this subject;

8. *Invites* States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[7] to include information on measures taken to implement the outcome of the twenty-third special session, as well as the Beijing Platform for Action, in their reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women under article 18 of the Convention;

9. *Urges* Member States to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto,[8] in particular the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and welcomes the imminent entry into force of that Protocol on 25 December 2003;

10. *Invites* Member States to submit, before 30 April 2004, responses to the questionnaire of the Secretariat on the implementation of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, in preparation for the review and appraisal mandated in the multi-year programme of work of the Commission on the Status of Women;[9]

11. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council to continue its efforts to ensure that gender mainstreaming is an integral part of all activities in its work and that of its subsidiary bodies, building upon agreed conclusions 1997/2 adopted by the Council on 18 July 1997,[3] and in this regard welcomes the inclusion of the question of gender mainstreaming in its agenda, the consideration of annual progress made in gender mainstreaming and the attention given to the gender perspective in the outcomes of the substantive session of 2003 of the Council;

12. *Encourages* the Economic and Social Council to request the regional commissions, within their respective mandates and resources, to intensify efforts to build up a database, to be updated regularly, in which all programmes and projects carried out in their respective regions by organizations or bodies of the United Nations system are listed, and to facilitate the dissemination of information on such programmes and projects, as well as the evaluation of their impact on the empowerment of women through the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action;

13. *Welcomes* the contribution of the Commission on the Status of Women to the follow-up and review of the future implementation of the commitments made in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, reaffirms that the Commission will continue to play a central role in this regard, and encourages Governments, the relevant specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and civil society to continue to support its work;

14. *Recognizes* the importance attached to the regional and subregional monitoring of the global and regional platforms for action and of the implementation of the outcome of the twenty-third special session by regional commissions and

[7] Resolution 34/180, annex.

[8] Resolution 55/25, annexes I-III, and resolution 55/255, annex.

[9] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 7* (E/2001/99), resolution 2001/4.

other regional or subregional structures, within their mandates, in consultation with Governments, and calls for the promotion of further cooperation in that respect among Governments and, where appropriate, national machineries of the same region;

15. *Also recognizes* that sustained political will and commitment at the national, regional and international levels are essential elements for the full and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

16. *Emphasizes* that the promotion of gender equality and of women's empowerment and participation, together with the mainstreaming of a gender perspective, are among the essential elements for advancing the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[10] with a view in particular to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions;

17. *Recognizes* that adequate mobilization of resources at the national and international levels, as well as new and additional resources for the developing countries, including the least developed countries and countries with economies in transition, from all available funding mechanisms, including multilateral, bilateral and private sources, will also be required;

18. *Emphasizes* that the creation of an enabling environment at the national and international levels, including through ensuring the participation of women on an equal basis with men at all levels of decision-making, is necessary to ensure the full participation of women in economic activities, and calls upon States to remove obstacles to the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

19. *Reaffirms* that, in order to ensure the effective implementation of the strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, the United Nations system should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective, including through the work of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the maintenance of gender units and focal points;

20. *Also reaffirms* that United Nations bodies that focus on gender issues, such as the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and the United Nations Children's Fund, have a critical role to play in the implementation of the objectives of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, and recognizes that gender specialists throughout the United Nations system also have an important role to play in this regard;

21. *Recognizes* the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to

[10] See resolution 55/2.

conflict prevention and resolution, and urges the United Nations system and Governments to make further efforts in this regard and to take steps to ensure and support the full participation of women at all levels of decision-making and implementation in development activities and peace processes, including conflict prevention and resolution, post-conflict reconstruction, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building, as well as through the integration of a gender perspective into those United Nations processes;

22. *Expresses its appreciation* for the efforts made by all relevant organizations of the United Nations system in promoting the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution;

23. *Welcomes* the convening of the World Summit on the Information Society, to be held at Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis in 2005, and encourages Governments and all other stakeholders to integrate a gender perspective into the preparatory processes and outcome documents, taking into account the agreed conclusions on participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women, adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session,[11] and the report of the Secretary-General;[6]

24. *Welcomes also* the entry into force of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[12] and urges States parties to the Convention that have not yet done so to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to the Optional Protocol;

25. *Requests* all bodies that deal with programme and budgetary matters, including the Committee for Programme and Coordination, to ensure that all programmes, medium-term plans and programme budgets visibly mainstream a gender perspective;

26. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to disseminate the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session as widely as possible in all the official languages of the United Nations;

27. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to integrate a gender perspective in his reporting to the General Assembly, in order to support gender-sensitive policy formulation;

28. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to report annually to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women on follow-up to and progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, with an assessment of progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective within the United Nations system, including by providing information on key achievements, lessons learned and best practices, and to recommend further measures and strategies for future action within the United Nations system;

29. *Requests* the Secretary-General to include in his annual and quinquennial reports on the follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration[10] an

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[11] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 7* (E/2003/27), chap. I, sect. A, draft resolution III.

[12] Resolution 54/4, annex.

assessment of the progress made in promoting the goal of gender equality, in particular in relation to the development goals set forth in the Millennium Declaration, and recommendations to improve the measurement and coverage of indicators so that progress towards gender equality can be evaluated over time;

30. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that all United Nations personnel and officials at Headquarters and in the field, especially in field operations, receive training on mainstreaming a gender perspective in their work, including gender impact analysis, and to ensure appropriate follow-up to such training;

31. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide, by the end of 2004, a compilation of updated and substantiated statistics from Member States and other relevant sources on the situation of women and girls, including older women, in countries around the world, including by issuing a new volume of *The World's Women: Trends and Statistics*;

32. *Recognizes* the need to further include a gender perspective in the work of its Main Committees;

33. *Recalls*, in this regard, its request to each functional commission of the Economic and Social Council to examine its methods of work in order to better pursue the implementation of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits, recognizing that there is no need for a uniform approach since each functional commission has its own specificity while noting that modern methods of work can better guarantee the review of progress made in implementation at all levels, on the basis of a report containing recommendations to be submitted by the Secretary-General to each functional commission and relevant subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council on their methods of work, in accordance with the provisions defined by the respective outcomes and relevant decisions taken by each body, bearing in mind the progress recently achieved in this regard by certain commissions, in particular the Commission on Sustainable Development, and recalling that the functional commissions and other relevant bodies of the Economic and Social Council should report to the Council no later than 2005 on the outcome of this examination;

34. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-ninth session the item entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled 'Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century'".